

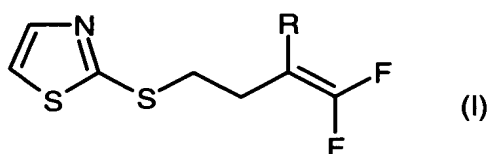
AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

Please change the heading at page 17, line 1, from "Claims" to --WHAT IS CLAIMED IS--

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions of claims in the application.

Claims 1-16 (canceled)

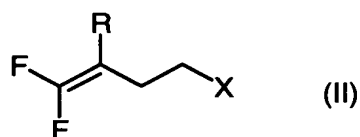
-- Claim 17 (new): A process for preparing a compound of formula (I)



where R is H or F,

comprising

(a) reacting a compound of formula (II)



where

R is H or F, and

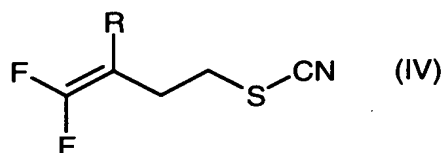
X is bromine, chlorine, mesylate, or tosylate,

with a compound of formula (III)



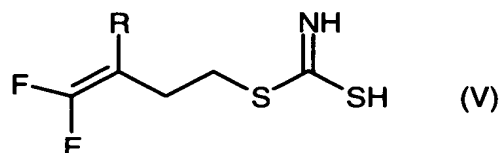
where M^+ is hydrogen, an ammonium ion, a tetraalkylammonium ion, or an alkali metal or alkaline earth metal ion,

optionally in the presence of a reaction auxiliary and optionally in the presence of a diluent, to give a compound of formula (IV)



where R is H or F,

- (b) converting the compound of formula (IV) by adding hydrogen sulphide or salts thereof, optionally in the presence of a reaction auxiliary and optionally in the presence of a diluent, to a compound of formula (V)

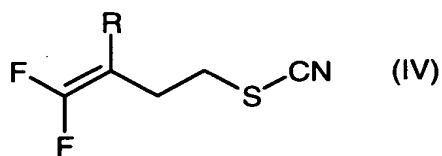


where R is H or F,

and

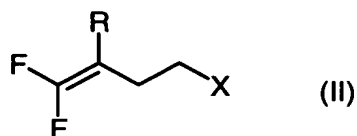
- (c) reacting the compound of formula (V) with acetaldehyde or chloroacetaldehyde (ClCH_2CHO), or an acetal thereof, optionally in the presence of an acidic reaction auxiliary and optionally in the presence of a diluent, thereby forming the compound of formula (I).

Claim 18 (new): A process for preparing a compound of formula (IV)



where R is H or F,

comprising reacting a compound of formula (II)

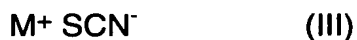


where

where R is H or F, and

X is bromine, chlorine, mesylate, or tosylate,

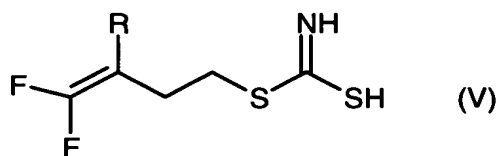
with a thiocyanate salt of formula (III)



where M^+ is hydrogen, an ammonium ion, a tetraalkylammonium ion, or an alkali metal or alkaline earth metal ion,

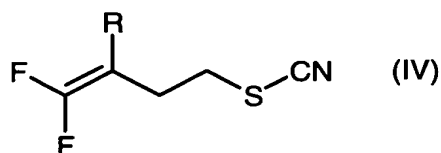
optionally in the presence of a reaction auxiliary and optionally in the presence of a diluent.

Claim 19 (new): A process for preparing a compound of formula (V)



where R is H or F,

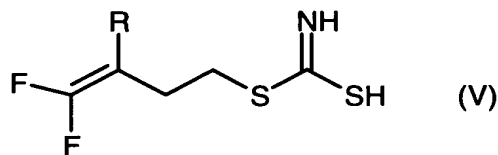
comprising reacting a compound of formula (IV)



where R is H or F,

with hydrogen sulphide or salts thereof, optionally in the presence of a reaction auxiliary and optionally in the presence of a diluent.

Claim 20 (new): A process for preparing a compound of formula (I) according to Claim 17 comprising reacting a compound of formula (V)



where R is H or F,

with acetaldehyde or chloroacetaldehyde (ClCH_2CHO), or an acetal thereof, optionally in the presence of a diluent and optionally in the presence of an acidic reaction auxiliary.

Claim 21 (new): A process according to Claim 17 wherein the compound of formula (II) is reacted with HSCN in the presence of a base to give the compound of formula (IV).

Claim 22 (new): A process according to Claim 18 wherein the compound of formula (II) is reacted with HSCN in the presence of a base.

Claim 23 (new): A process according to Claim 17 wherein the thiocyanate salt of formula (III) is NH_4SCN .

Claim 24 (new): A process according to Claim 18 wherein the thiocyanate salt of formula (III) is NH_4SCN .

Claim 25 (new): A process according to Claim 23 carried out in the presence of an alcohol as diluent.

Claim 26 (new): A process according to Claim 24 carried out in the presence of an alcohol as diluent.

Claim 27 (new): A process according to Claim 17 wherein the compound of formula (IV) is converted to the compound of formula (V) with H_2S .

Claim 28 (new): A process according to Claim 19 wherein the compound of formula (IV) is converted to the compound of formula (V) with H_2S .

Claim 29 (new): A process according to Claim 17 wherein step (b) is carried out in the presence of a base.

Claim 30 (new): A process according to Claim 19 carried out in the presence of a base.

Claim 31 (new): A process according to Claim 27 carried out in the presence of a base.

Claim 32 (new): A process according to Claim 28 carried out in the presence of a base.

Claim 33 (new): A process according to Claim 17 wherein the compound of formula (V) is reacted with chloroacetaldehyde dialkyl acetal.

Claim 34 (new): A process according to Claim 20 wherein the compound of formula (V) is reacted with chloroacetaldehyde dialkyl acetal.

Claim 35 (new): A process according to Claim 17 wherein step (c) is carried out in the presence of an acid.

Claim 36 (new): A process according to Claim 20 carried out in the presence of an acid.

Claim 37 (new): A process according to Claim 34 carried out in the presence of an acid.

Claim 38 (new): A process according to Claim 17 wherein the compound of formula (V) is reacted with chloroacetaldehyde or an acetal thereof in the presence of from 0.1 to 10 mol% of p-toluenesulphonic acid or methanesulphonic acid.

Claim 39 (new): A process according to Claim 20 wherein the compound of formula (V) is reacted with chloroacetaldehyde or an acetal thereof in the presence of from 0.1 to 10 mol% of p-toluenesulphonic acid or methanesulphonic acid.

Claim 40 (new): A process according to Claim 17 wherein the compound of formula (V) is reacted with acetaldehyde.

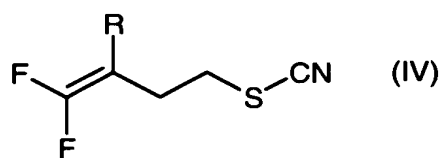
Claim 41 (new): A process according to Claim 20 wherein the compound of formula (V) is reacted with acetaldehyde.

Claim 42 (new): A process according to Claim 17 wherein R is fluorine.

Claim 43 (new): A process according to Claim 18 wherein R is fluorine.

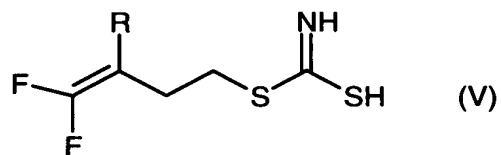
Claim 44 (new): A process according to Claim 19 wherein R is fluorine.

Claim 45 (new): A compound of formula (IV)



where R is H or F.

Claim 46 (new): A compound of formula (V)



or a salt thereof,

where R is hydrogen. --